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THE  
**CONFESSIONS OF A MAGDALEN,**

**SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE**

OF

**EXPERIENCE BORGIA,**

IN LETTERS TO

**FORGIVENESS MANDEVILLE, Esq.**

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“And Vane can tell what ills from beauty spring,  
And Sedy cursed the form that pleased a king.”

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And Sedy cursed the form that pleased a king.”

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FRANCIS INGRAHAM  
CLERK OF THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW-YORK  
NEW-YORK

## PREFACE.

These letters of an injured and ruined woman are given to the public, in the hope that they will do something to repress cant, to teach the youthful to be wary, and to prove to them that the paths of what is called pleasure, lead down to the chambers of death. If there are some things in my narrative thought to be severe, my hopes of happiness upon it, they are just. The prince of darkness sometimes appears as the angel of light.

“When lovely woman stoops to folly,  
And finds, too late, that men betray,  
What charm can soothe her melancholy—  
What art can wash her guilt away?”

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## CONFESSIONS OF A MAGDALEN.

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DEAR SIR,—

In the shades of retirement I now sit down to fulfil my promise, made to you when you protected my property, and thereby enabled me to retire to this delightful spot. It would, perhaps, have been much better for me to have tried to have forgotten every passage of my life. Since I was sixteen years of age every successive day has brought some new misery to my heart, and self-degradation increased with their accumulation. But I will not moralize here; I shall have opportunities enough for these reflections as I proceed in the narration I am about to give you.

I was born on the seaboard, in this country, in October, 1789, the day President Washington visited the city of my birth; but for dates and places in the course of my confessions I beg to be excused, for, in the first place, the bump of locality has not been well developed on my skull, and somehow or other I always hated precise dates; and formerly, more particularly as it regarded my own age, I despised an antiquarian who could state to you the hour of the day or night when your great grandmother was born, whether on that day the sun was clouded, or whether on that night Jupiter or Venus was the star that most attracted the gaze of the astronomers.

My father was a man of reputation and respectable property; he died while I was young, but my mother took the greatest care of my education, and my exertions rewarded her pains and cares; for I scarcely remember a school day that my neck was not hung with a medal for some class honor. At fourteen I was taken from a boarding school, and was told by my mother that from law suits and neglect of agents her property was entirely gone, and that her house was sold over her head. My mother's lawyer came frequently to our house, and he seemed on his first visit to gaze on me so intently that I turned my face from him with a blush; not that he was rude, however, for he was one of the most polished of men. He questioned me about my studies, recommended several books for me to read, and made an offer of the use of his own extensive library. My mother accepted his offer in my name.

Nearly a year passed over in this way, and matters had been so managed that I had not felt the want of any thing. But the crisis came; my mother had to remove into the country, and it was considered by all my friends that it was best for me to learn the art of a millener and mantuamaker. Fifty dollars were required by the mistress of the shop before I could be allowed to commence learning my trade. The lawyer I have named advanced the money, and inquired of the good woman who was to be my mistress what sum would clothe me handsomely until I had served my time out. She named it, and he gave her permission to call on him for that amount as I should require it. This counsellor was young, high spirited and generous; he was the idol of all the "good society" females of the city, and although acknowledged by all to be honorable, he was considered as a dangerous man, "formed to make woman false." There is no vanity in acknowledging it

now, "for all that bloom has fled;" I was thought the handsomest girl that appeared at our crowded church, and, by the liberality of my patron, I was dressed better than most, and quite equal to any. One instance of his generosity I cannot help remembering:—A new fashioned bonnet was just imported from France, which he sent to me, and my mistress, with my consent, kept it as a pattern for customers, and I did not wear it at all. I wrote a note to my patron, stating to him the circumstance by way of excuse. My chirography was fine and the note was composed with care. He wrote me a kind answer, but the hand writing was such a sad scrawl that it took me two hours to find out every word in it. I saw him to converse with him only once after this for years. He had never spoken to me but in the presence of a third person. His manner was kind, but his conversation restrained. I was told that he was the most fascinating conversationist in the world, and I could easily believe it, for the tones of his voice were at once so soft, and yet commanding, I shall never forget them, nor what he said. He was the only being that ever had my heart, my whole heart! How many times would I have been willing to have died to have added to his fame or happiness; but to neither have I added a straw, on the contrary I have injured both. In short, I loved him to distraction; but I knew, or might have known, that I could not wed him, yet I could not give up the thought, however desperate, that he would some day or other be mine.

It was noticed by my good mistress that my health was declining, but she had no suspicion of the cause of my illness. I never made a confidant of any one, nor did my proud patron suspect the cause when my mistress sent him an account of my situation. He gave orders to have his physician sent for, and to request him to send the bill to him. The physician prescribed some delicacies, no medicine, and riding out to take the air early in the morning, as the best restoratives for me. As soon as this was known to my patron, a polite offer was made to my mother, who had come into town to see me, of his horse and chaise, whenever I was inclined to ride. It was not only offered, but sent every fair morning to our door, and a servant came for it at breakfast time, and waited if we had not returned; and in the afternoon, the same attention was frequently manifested. In all this time every delicacy was sent from the hotel at which my patron and friend boarded, to provoke my appetite, which was wretched, but—the man did not appear.

One morning the horse we were driving, who was remarkably steady, for a high-fed, elegant animal, pricked up his ears and set out in a furious trot to overtake some saddle horses before us. The quick eye of one in love soon told me that the gallant and chivalrous youth, the object of all my affections, rode one of them. As we passed, for they were on a gentle trot, we received a most elegant bow, as affectionate as graceful, from my mother's lawyer. I can hardly say I had a second look—my vision grew dark, and I nearly fainted. My mother was too much intent on managing the reins, to notice or to watch me, and I escaped detection that time.

In this state of mind, I strove hard to read such books as were calculated to soothe my wounded heart, but I could find nothing that did me any good. I wished to quarrel with my patron, but what could I complain of?—and I must acknowledge that I visited among his political enemies to hear something said against him; in this I was, at times, gratified, and instantly my blood boiled at their falsehoods, and I had liked to have betrayed myself by firmly contradicting them; but my prudence, and the habitual control I had kept over my tongue in every thing that related to my friend, saved me from exposure. One resource I had for comfort was to attend afternoon lectures at the different churches and vestries; and the good people there seeing me very devout, for I was striving to make my heart "*quit Abellard for God*," were exceedingly bountiful in their attentions.

It was thought by my good friends, who now came around me, that my health

would not suffer, as my lungs were not affected, by attending conference meetings in the evening. My physician had forbid my taking the evening air, but their solicitations were so importunate, that I yielded. The speeches, readings, and prayers, were all excellent, but when they came to ask each one the state of his mind, my heart sunk within me, fearing that it would be my turn next. Fortunately, however, they did not question me,—I had not been far enough initiated for such a trial, though I had made up my mind to give them some evasive answer; but these people knew too much to put me to the test at that moment. I was not sufficiently under their influence for such an ordeal, and of course was spared. At the next meeting, several serious, good women invited me to a more select meeting, of their persuasion, as they called it. My vanity was flattered, and I consented to go, on condition that my mother would attend me. This they did not seem entirely satisfied with, but at length faintly invited her. She refused the invitation at once, being a good sound episcopalian, and “finding nothing”—as she said—“about conferences in her liturgy.” As, however, she expressed no objections to my going, I accepted their invitation and attended. The meeting was more than ordinarily affectionate, and I formed an acquaintance with several young students in divinity and clergymen of quite a youthful appearance. At this meeting it was distinctly understood that my heart was to be probed for a discovery of my besetting sin. Some questions were put to me, but I evaded them by alluding to the change in the circumstances of my family connexions. They praised me for my talents and acquirements, and told me what a dangerous world this was for such beauty as mine. There were present two or three maiden ladies, whose sharp noses, pointed chins, and red, sore eyes, made no favorable impression upon me, at that time of innocence and confiding affection; and who, I have found, since I have so sadly acquired a knowledge of human nature, were worshippers of Bacchus in their closets, and came, full of wine or strong drink, to praise the Maker of heaven and earth. These creatures, who devote themselves to God because they are deserted by men, were painfully inquisitive about my acquaintance with the young gentlemen of the city. I avowed my ignorance of most of them, and asserted that the few I knew were of the most unexceptionable character. This evening’s progress towards an entire controul of me was altogether unsatisfactory to my kind friends, who had taken so deep an interest in my spiritual welfare. My patron heard of these visits of mine, and at his office, in a business interview with my mother, just intimated that these night meetings would not be beneficial to my health, but was happy to be assured by her that I was on the mending hand. He then observed, that he regretted his advice had not been followed when he was consulted upon the course I should pursue previous to my going to learn a trade. He then recommended my keeping a small school, and urged that with proper application to studies, and with a strict attention to duties, I should soon be qualified to instruct in some academy, to which he might recommend me, and suggested that if I felt so inclined he would then assist me to pursue such a course. But when I made known my inclination to this proposition to my religious friends, without telling them from whom it came, they would not hear of it until I had made my calling and election sure.

"Now was the day of grace, now was the hour of salvation," they all exclaimed, and if it was not now improved, everlasting punishment was my lot. The most horrid pictures of hell and its torments were presented to my eyes, and in proportion to my horror and distress at these sufferings of the damned were the strength of their hopes in my conversion. As I struggled, grew weak, and fainted, the louder were the hallelujahs they sung.

After lying for some time in one of these delirious reveries I was induced to tell what scenes had passed in the trance. They were, indeed, truly wonderful, and seemed as strongly impressed upon my mind as if all had been real. The subject of my vision was of the nature of those feelings the preaching and praying and exhorting had inspired at that time, and previous; but of this I was myself not aware at the time, so strongly was I affected. I seemed to be walking in a lonely way; neither the voice nor the footstep of man was there, but groans of the deepest agony were often heard, such as pious divines have told us of in their discourses upon the regions of condemned spirits. Bursts of infernal smoke now and then ascended high and spread wide; and at length the air was filled with fiery dragons, that uttered yells not to be described nor likened to any sounds I had ever heard. The vision became more distinct, and I beheld fleecy and beautiful forms struggling with the fiends I first saw. The clash of swords was distinctly seen and heard, and all the elements seemed tortured beneath, and above, and around; the earth was like liquid iron, and the heavens like molten brass. I called on angels and God to protect me, for the smell of sulphur ascended my nostrils and the blue flames scorched my eyelids. I sunk senseless to the ground, and when I came to myself a bright and shining spirit stood by me and said, *or seemed to say*, "fear not, daughter; I am sent to save thee from the malignant foes who are bent on thy destruction; arise and go with me!" I attempted to stand up, but could not by reason of weakness. "No mortal," said the spirit, "can stand up by his own strength alone on these shores of doubt and fear. I will assist you." He stretched his hand and raised me up; it was more than of mortal touch. I walked at once the "impalpable and pathless sky," as one raised above mortal power. All the way was bright and glorious, studded with stars and filled with planets, singing as they shone, their Maker's praise. The abodes of the blest soon opened upon us, and there I heard sounds of joy, and saw myriads of beings hymning hosannas to the Most High. The soul of a redeemed sinner had just arrived, who had been plucked as a brand from the burning. It was a region where night never came, nor was it lightened by the light of the sun; the reconciled countenance of God irradiated the happy region. My beloved father spoke to me; and my dear little sister, who died in my arms, clung to my breast. The image of the blessed man who had been the pastor of the church in which I had been baptized welcomed one of his flock to the abodes of the happy. My senses seemed to ache with delight—the vision disappeared—and I found myself in the midst of you, my brethren!

I had made a faithful statement of all I saw in my trance, except that the angel who led me on was the exact image of the man I loved. This was not mentioned, fortunately or not, it is now impossible to say. They did not ask me how he

looked or whom he resembled. The general opinion was that the vision was from God ; but of this, I had some little doubt, for it seemed to me that if that angel would walk the earth with me, that I should be quite content to still stay upon it. Nor did they know the extent of my wanderings in the field of romance, nor the number of works of the imagination I had read. It is true they had been of the purest sort.

The style and language in which all this was given was indeed far above those of my age and standing in society ; in fact, my whole mind had a vestal cast, that surpassed those who were pure and honest about me, and quite silenced the hypocrites who had feigned such inspirations to get among the sanctified. The story of conversion had passed from the vestry to church meeting, and from thence to the whole congregation, and, by an easy progress, to the whole town. I was called upon to give my *experience* to sundry godly persons who called on me, until it became fatiguing, and I was induced to reduce it to writing. The public soon had it through the press, and I wish I could find a copy of it to send you, for my recollections at this distance of time are very faint, and this account has lost much of that glow it then had, much of the odour of sanctity that was the perfume of it as it came from my lips, and which, in a great measure, it contained, even in print. I have seen it since in tracts and other publications, mutilated and mended, or rather, altered, to suit the purposes of the publishers ; but the original I have lost, and with it all the feelings that produced it. There is something in the pure imaginings of a youthful mind, unacquainted with the wickedness of the world, that is kindred to godliness in every age and clime. I was then pure enough in thought, word and deed, to have been made a Roman vestal, and to have taken in charge the most sacred vessels of the temple. Even in the vision, like the lady in Comus, I felt protected by my chastity. Lost and degraded as I am, or rather have been, I never think of that age of my chastity and fearlessness without wishing to obliterate every hour of my existence since from my memory, and not only from my own, but from the memories of all beings but that of my Maker's. I would make my daughters, if I had any,—but, thank heaven, I have no living child to partake of my infamy,—read it, commit it, and a thousand times repeat this talisman from Milton. Pardon me for filling my pages with it at this moment, when I am hurrying on in my narrative, which I am anxious you should have, for I trust you may use it for a lesson to the rising generation, who are assailed by temptations on all sides, from the profligate and the hypocritical. I quote it from memory.

*Bro.* What hidden strength,  
Unless the strength of heaven, if you mean that ?  
*Eld. Bro.* I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,  
Which if heaven gave it, may be term'd her own,  
'Tis chastity, my Brother, chastity :  
She that has that, is clad in complete steel,  
And like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen  
May trace huge forests, and unharbor'd heaths,  
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds,  
Where through the sacred rays of chastity,  
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer  
Will dare to soil her virgin purity :  
Yea there, where very desolation dwells  
By grots, and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,  
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,  
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.  
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,  
In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen,  
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,  
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,

No goblin, or swart fairy of the mine,  
 Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.  
 Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call  
 Antiquity from the old schools of Greece  
 To testify the arms of chastity ?  
 Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,  
 Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,  
 Wherewith she tam'd the brindled lioness  
 And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought  
 The frivolous bolt of Cupid ; gods and men  
 Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' th' woods.  
 What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,  
 That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,  
 Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,  
 But rigid looks of chaste austerity,  
 And noble grace that dash'd brute violence  
 With sudden adoration, and blank awe ?  
 So dear to heaven is saintly chastity,  
 That when a soul is found sincerely so,  
 A thousand liveried angels lacky her,  
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,  
 And in clear dream, and solemn vision,  
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,  
 Till oft converse with heavenly habitants,  
 Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape,  
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,  
 And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,  
 Till all be made immortal : but when lust,  
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,  
 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,  
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,  
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,  
 Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose  
 The divine property of her first being.  
 Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp  
 Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,  
 Ling'ring, and sitting by a new made grave,  
 As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,  
 And link'd itself by carnal sensuality  
 To a degenerate and degraded state.

I was constantly importuned to join the church, that is, to become a communicant, but I could not bring my mind to it. I did not think myself sufficiently good to dedicate myself to God. A young licentiate, who was a candidate for some parish to which he might be called, was especially deputed to take my case in hand, and reason and pray with me, in order to bring me to a proper frame of mind. He was a gentleman of fascinating manners, when he threw aside that stiff, conventicle air which preachers assume in order to give dignity to empty skulls, or to hide their intellectual poverty. He was not deeply learned, nor wonderfully acute, but good sense and true piety marked the man. He was constant in his visits for some time, and every hour brought me nearer to the communion table. In short, I was, by my own request, propounded for admission. There were no objections made, and I was regularly admitted ; and although not quite easy about my vision, whether it was from God or from my heated imagination, I went on very well.—My health improved, and I began to reason more upon my hopeless passion, and thought that I was gaining the mastery over myself. I had not seen my patron during all these last conflicts, but his kindness still continued, particularly towards my mother ; but she observed that in her several last business visits to him, that he said but a few words about me.

Soon after I made myself one of the church, a bright and shining light was introduced into our circle, the Rev. Deodat Pigeon. He was called a searching preacher, gifted in

prayer, and could speak without notes. I shall never forget his appearance the first time I saw him. It was at an evening lecture. He was *brotherly, warm, and tender*. He enquired so kindly after the state of our minds, and seemed so deeply interested in the concerns of our souls, that he touched the hearts of many of the believers on that evening. "Oh! how sound were his principles, oh! how beautifully he described sin and sinners!" broke from many tongues. He talked wisely upon election—the secret will of God—the awful depravity of man. One sentence I distinctly remember of that discourse, which was much admired by all the congregation, and was often repeated by my sisters in the Lord. "*Methinks* (said the Rev. Deodat Pigeon) *that I beheld the sinner pursuing the malignity of his heart to the extent of his wishes; on earth destroying God's people, demolishing his houses of public worship, drinking, with blasphemous oaths, the cup of his blood; then ascending to heaven, quenching out the stars, putting the angels to lingering deaths, and assaulting God on his throne; and then returning with his hellish torch brandishing over the universe with fiendish joy!*" By such sound discourses did the Rev. Deodat Pigeon delight the elect. For my own part, I could not see much liberality in all this, but I was told it was sinning against God to indulge in liberal feelings—that liberal feelings were wicked feelings—that all true christians must rejoice in the damnation of the sinner, even if that sinner was the mother who bore us. I must confess that I could not be brought to it, but was silent. They were experienced christians, and I was but a child, though at times I found my knowledge of the bible rather better than theirs, or, perhaps, I should have said my memory.

The reverend gentleman was particularly attentive to me after divine services were over. He spoke to me of my wonderful vision, and inquired who drew it up for me. I modestly answered that I had no assistance in that humble effort. "No assistance!"—he exclaimed,—"*wonderful!*—the hand of God was there." I blushed and was silent. He attended me to my lodgings, and conversed upon religious matters with great enthusiasm. The next Sunday he preached at our meeting house, and I caught his eye several times during divine service. In the evening, at the conference, he was there, and was so attentive to me, that some of the old-maid-saints were not a little restless. He was sagacious enough to see it, and did not, on that night, attend me home, but took one of the "*sharp visaged Dians*," from whom a Satyr, with all his passions, would have fled with disgust. This was a timely peace-offering, and saved many hard thoughts, I have no doubt.

It was now time for me to begin to think of opening a shop for myself, and Mr. Pigeon, on hearing of this, recommended the village in which he lived as a good place for my business. My mother went there to inquire, and returned pleased with the place. She was now in better circumstances than she had been, for her lawyer, ever faithful to her interests, had saved something from the wreck of my father's property at home, and had lately recovered several thousand dollars due the estate in the West Indies. She offered to loan me a sufficient sum to set up in business, and as living was cheap in that village, she prepared to go there and board with me. A house was hired for the purpose, and we moved into it. The Rev. Mr. Pigeon introduced us to the good people of the place, and my business being very good, we were comfortable and happy. He proposed conference meetings at our house, but my mother did not readily consent, though after repeated solicitations, she yielded. Our house was now opened, and the brothers

and sisters began to frequent our meetings of love, and to take a part in our devotions. The pastor was never absent from us, and he prayed most earnestly for an outpouring of the spirit, and was, as the good people thought, heard. Many began to feel seriously inclined, who had not before been attentive to religion.

It was now thought, on all hands, that I was betrothed to Mr. Pigeon. It is true that he was very particular in his attentions to me, and my mother considered the match as certain, although nothing of a direct nature had transpired between us. I could, at that time, have tolerated the connexion, yet I never loved the man. The conferences grew more serious and more popular. Mr. Pigeon had much to do in our public and more private meetings. At ten o'clock in the evening he would dismiss all, generally, but a few lingered behind. With these he prayed more fervently, and they were again dismissed. Still a few of the most zealous would seem unwilling to depart, and he exhorted with them until nearly midnight, when he took his leave of me and went home with them, as it was too late for them to go alone. As they soon turned from the main road, perhaps he could not go far with all, and he selected some one in so adroit a way that what was design seemed accident. I now began to be sharp-sighted, as I grew a little jealous, and now and then I gently reminded him of his holy calling, and hinted at the necessity of circumspection; but he always, on such occasions, adverted to his sanctity of character, and defied Satan to injure one whom the Lord had protected; and he said often, in my hearing, that the angels had charge that he should not dash his foot against a stone. On such occasions, he grew more affectionate towards me, and if he had not been a holy man, I should have thought him amorously inclined, for he would sometimes demand a perfect-love kiss, which was yielded, thinking that we were soon to be married,—for so said all the parish. One evening when mother was gone to town, he came to drink tea with me, and a thunder shower coming on he could not conveniently go to his lodgings. The storm was terrific, and one of the errors of my education was a dread of thunder and lightning. I was never more frightened than on that evening. Several times a faintness seized me, and I was obliged to ask his permission to retire to my bedroom. I had been there but a few moments, when he brought me a tincture of peppermint, which he begged me to drink as bracing to my nerves. I hesitated to swallow it, but he insisted and I obeyed. Shortly an uncontrollable sleepiness came over me, and I fell into a state of insensibility; and as I was losing my senses, I thought that I had never experienced such a sensation before. I dreamt that he came to my room and breathed his murmurings on my face; that he attempted liberties with me which I struggled to repel. In the morning I awoke late, called my maid for some tea, and never felt so strangely before. My maid told me that Mr. Pigeon had gone out of the house just at day-light—horror seized my soul—and I exclaimed, loud enough to be heard all over the house, *I am ruined!*

When my mother returned about noon I was delirious, and continued out of mind for three days; and when I came to myself I was alarmed for fear that in my ravings I had committed myself; but on talking with my Mother I soon found that she was still ignorant of my disgrace. It was all attributed to the thunder storm, but when the maid inquired after my health I saw that she had some sad



suspicious in her mind, some " lurking devil in her eye," but I did not dare question her very far at that time. My mother discovered that it was very singular that Parson Pigeon did not come to the house ; but this was soon accounted for, by understanding that he had necessarily left town early in the morning after the storm, and had made provision for an exchange, or supply of his pulpit the next Sabbath. The Sunday passed, and I was so quiet that my mother went to church and invited the officiating clergyman, who supplied the pulpit that day for Mr. Pigeon, to come to our house to tea. He wished after tea to see me and converse upon religious subjects. My mother refused to admit him to my chamber, stating partially my delirium after the thunder storm. If he had come up stairs to see me, I had made up my mind to state the whole affair.

In a few days Parson Pigeon returned, and my mother instantly sent for him. He came, for he had been about the parish and not a word had been whispered to him of any other thing than my fright at the thunder storm ; of course he came to the conclusion that I had been silent upon the outrage, or perhaps did not know it myself ; or if I knew something of it, not to the full extent. Thus encouraged, he ventured to the house, and requested my mother to permit him to see me. They came into the chamber together. I hid my head under the bed-clothes, and sobbed, to the great distress of my dear parent. The hypocrite was solemn, and with a sigh requested my mother to retire, while he would set by the bedside and by degrees " approach the heart-stricken deer." She, good soul, suspecting nothing, left the room. As soon as she was gone he knelt by my bedside, and I rose with imprecations on his life—on his happiness. I called God to witness that I would unmask his character as soon as I could leave my bed ; when he faintly cried " my dear wife—my love—my happiness—my all on earth,—grace for a moment deserted me,—the tempter reigned over me,—I have prayed to God and he has forgiven me. Forgive me ! Oh ! forgive me ! I will, as soon as you are recovered, make you my lawful wife—we will yet be happy !" The repentance of a sinner is always regarded with pity by a woman wronged. I partly relented ; suffered him to take my hand, and before he left the room he imprinted a kiss on my forehead, and at the same time called his God to witness the sincerity of his vows. He proved from scripture that patriarchs and saints had their failings, and at times had been overcome. The meek Moses, in smiting the rock, had suffered his passions to misguide him, and took to himself the credit for a miracle which God had wrought ; David, a man after God's own heart, had been led to adultery by Uriah's beautiful wife ; and then looking up to me most tenderly, said, " no daughter of Israel was ever half so fair as the sole object of my affections—the idol of my soul—who is now before me." He took leave of me, and I was calm, if not satisfied. My mother coming into the room, was astonished to find what a soother of the human soul is a holy man. And the Doctor said my fever had turned. The son of Æsculapius had a case above his medicinal art. He dwelt upon the virtues of the pills he had administered ;—they were a family pill, made by his great grandfather, and kept a secret ever since. The ingredients had never been discovered by the greatest chemists of the age, although the great Dr. Rush had tried hard to analyze the compound, and the still greater Dr. Smith could do nothing to even assist him

in guessing what they were made of, Yankee as he was. Nor could that still greatest of all men—who knew all things from their birth—yea, before,—Dr. Mitchill,—he who had examined nature as a foetus, and had marked all her wrinkles of age now perceptible, and even foretold at what time the *dame's* fecundity would cease, ever venture to assert what they were made of. I had not, however, swallowed a particle of the panacea, for no such stuff could reach the “written troubles of my brain,” or operate as an anodyne to my palpitating heart.

The parsonage house was undergoing repairs, and as money came in slowly the work went slowly on. I entreated my lover to open the business of marriage to my mother, but this he evaded, by some artifice or other, from time to time. The summer passed away, and the autumn was beginning to waste also. It now became evident to myself that I could not long remain with safety, for the keen eyes of my mother were cast in scrutinizing glances over my form, and my blushes led to sad suspicions. I named my situation to Mr. Pigeon. He said the banns of matrimony should be cried the next Sabbath. This was on Tuesday morning; the next day one of the old maids, who had frequently visited me when I was well, raised a report in the neighborhood that she had lost her watch; one that was given her by her father many years before. The watch was described, in general terms, as a large gold one, of English manufacture. It was soon afterwards hinted that some one who had been in my chamber had seen a watch of this description. In the afternoon an officer came to our house and said it was his painful duty to state to my mother that Miss Quinn suspected that Experience had taken her watch, and that he must search the house for it. My mother fell into a convulsion fit, and when it was made known to me I fainted. All this was considered by those kind friends who were about the officer as proofs of guilt. The officer came to my chamber, and, as directed, began his search there. A watch was soon found which had been my father's. A further search was made, and Miss Quinn's watch was found. “Good God!” I exclaimed, “it was put there to ruin me!” I was carried before Justice Funk, who bound me over to the next court in the sum of one thousand dollars. My mother offered to be my bail, but she was not accepted. No one appeared to join her as my security, and I was put into a wagon in a state of insensibility and driven off nineteen miles to a jail. The wife of the jailor, struck with my appearance, instantly took my part, and instead of putting me into the worst cell, as requested by the officer who brought me to prison, she put me into an upper room, more decent than the others, and prepared a cot bed for me. I had not been there long before my mother came also. She had followed me as soon as she could procure a conveyance. I had just come to my senses. The thought struck me, that Pigeon was at the bottom of all this; but at first I had supposed that this envious old maid had contrived it from a hatred to me, on hearing it whispered that I was shortly to become the minister's lady. This thought was wormwood to my soul. Could man be so base? But why was not Pigeon at my examination?—ah why! My mother spent the night with me. She was now firm; her religion, which was all quiet, habitual, pure, without any of that furious excitement which leads to false conclusions, supported her, and shed its influences on me, who considered myself a more hopeful subject of grace than my mother.

Soon after the jailor's daughter had brought us a cup of coffee in the morning, I heard a voice, whose well-known sounds were always music in my ears, say, with no little emphasis, "bring the ladies down into the parlor." We were soon brought down—my mother's lawyer was there. He received us kindly, and said to my mother, "your daughter is bailed; be calm, be firm; I will pursue the hypocrite to the gates of hell, but I will have justice done him. Go home—leave all to me." I was surprised to see him so soon, but I must confess I expected to hear from him as soon as he was apprised of our situation. But the mystery of his sudden appearance was explained by the jailor's daughter, who said the Superior Court of the State was then in session in the town, and that the gentleman who had just retired was engaged in several important cases then to be tried before that court, as she had learned from her father.

The time we spent on the road I occupied in detailing to my mother all the circumstances of my connexion with Pigeon. She was not so much surprised as I thought she would be, but sighed and said "I hope God will deliver us out of all this trouble." My heart responded AMEN, but I had awful forebodings.

Pigeon sent a note to my mother, saying it would be improper for him to visit either mother or daughter until their characters were cleared up. But between the time of my arrest and my trial, the Rev. George Christopher Sinclair made me a visit. He came to probe me, as he said, to the quick. He said he was aware of my moral and physical situation, and asked if I could not conscientiously swear my expected issue upon this or that man, naming among others, my patron. At this diabolical insinuation I raved and tore like a mad-woman, and mentioned all the circumstances of Pigeon's rascality. He calmly said that "all I could say would do the rev. gentleman [no harm; he was a saint who could not fall from grace; nor would the world believe me, say what I would; but if I would charge it on a particular gentleman he would be my friend." "Curse your friendship, or the pretended friendship of your infernal associates; I despise, abhor, spit upon it. Leave me, base wretch!"—and I threw a cup which was in my hand at his head. He turned upon me a smile that was more horrible than all the ravings of a mad-man.

My trial, in due course of time, came on, and my faithful preserver was there, but made not a single inquiry of me. Miss Quinn was called, but made no answer. The Rev. Mr. Sinclair stepped forward and said Miss Quinn was too unwell to attend court. My counsel insisted that his declaration was insufficient, and called upon the reverend gentleman to make affidavit, which he did, that she was, to his knowledge, sick—that he had seen her that morning seventeen miles off—that he came from her house that morning, and left her very unwell. The court were about to postpone the cause, when my counsel asked for a few moments delay. He sent out of court and procured two respectable witnesses, who swore that the reverend gentleman went to bed the night before at ten o'clock, about three miles from the court house; and that he could not possibly have been where he stated that morning. Another swore that he knew where Miss Quinn was concealed, for the purpose of getting rid of this trial. A motion, as it was called, was made for an attachment to bring the witness into court; and in a few hours she made her appearance in the custody of an officer. Thus there was no excuse left for putting off the trial. Miss Quinn, after affecting a few fainting fits, swore that "the watch before the jury was hers, was given her by her father twenty years before, and that she had worn it ever since, occasionally, but that she valued it too much to wear it constantly; that the last time she saw it was the day on which the prisoner visited her; and that she seemed to eye it very

attentively. The next time she went to take it out to wind it up and wear, it was gone. She added, that it was with great pain that she suspected the prisoner, as she knew she was about to be married to her clergyman, but she could not help her suspicions, and she named it to the officer, who advised her to take a search warrant, and the watch was brought before the magistrate, who bound her over." The counsel for the prisoner took the watch in his hand. "Madam, you say you have had this watch twenty years?" "Yes Sir." "Do you remember the number of it?" "No Sir." "Have you ever put any watch papers into it?" "No Sir—there was a piece of red leather in the case." "Are the seals and chain yours?" "Yes Sir." "Have you ever used the seals?" "Yes Sir." "What are the devices on them?" "I don't know." "Are there mottoes on the seals?" "I don't remember any." "Are these the seals your father gave you? and if so, are they just as they were when you received them?" "They are the seals, and never, until they were stolen, were they out of my possession an hour." "You may sit down," said my counsel. "Mr. A. take the stand." "Are you a watch maker, Sir?" "That is my profession." "Did you ever see that watch before?" [Taking it and looking at it attentively.] "Yes Sir. That watch was sold a year ago, with other things, as a part of the estate of the late 'Squire Montgomery. I purchased it, fitted it up, and sold it. I am certain of what I say, for I have kept it in repair these thirty years past for the 'Squire, and I reckon if you let me lift up the leather there, I shall find one or two of my shop bills the size of watch papers." On taking out the leather there appeared two watch papers belonging to the witness, and another delicate painting of time, with his scythe and glass, with the name of Lucy Montgomery written upon it. A young gentleman, a son of 'Squire Montgomery, as witness called him, was questioned, who swore to the watch and the hand writing of his sister. "The seals," he said, "were given to his father many years before by the father of the gentleman now acting as counsel in the cause." The watch maker could not say precisely at what time he sold it, but thought it could not have been a great while. As he sold so many, he could not say so exactly as he wished, but "his books would tell, for he always kept an exact account of his purchases and sales." The advocate observed, "I thought of that after you left home yesterday, and summoned your son to bring the books. He is now here; but before I proceed to examine him on your books, I will call Miss Quinn again." On taking the stand, she fixed the third day of June as the time I last visited her. The watch maker, looking at his book, swore it was on the seventeenth of June, sixteen days afterwards, that the watch was sold. The judge instantly charged the jury to acquit me, and whispered to my counsel something about a warrant for perjury, but the reply was made in so low a tone that I did not hear it distinctly, and nothing more was said. I was handed from the prisoner's bar by the High Sheriff in the most polite manner; and he invited my mother and myself to spend the night at his house. As it was late in the afternoon, and we were among strangers, we accepted his polite invitation, and early the next morning set out for home.

My acquittal was hailed with joy all along the road, for such news spreads fast in country towns. Our neighbors came to the house and greeted my return with heartfelt joy; but the Rev. Mr. Pigeon did not make his appearance. It was said that he had been appointed on a mission to the western country, for his superior gifts in rousing the people to a state of excitement, and for bringing on awakenings. The general association supplied his pulpit in his absence.

As my counsel and patron was on his way to the city, he called on my mother with a justice of the peace, and took my declarations upon the whole matter on oath, particularly charging Mr. Pigeon with being the father of the child I was likely to bring into the world. The tale was so full of atrocity that the justice sent for another magistrate to be

with him, as the counsel would not be present nor hear one word of it. The story went no farther than the circle which heard it—it did not leak out; but my mother sold off our effects and we moved to a more distant country town, that I might be more privately confined. Some few suspected my situation, but they were good enough to say nothing about it.

Early in the spring, I went to get a pitcher of water at the well, and on my return slipped upon a piece of concealed ice near the door. My mother had gone to a neighboring town, and was not expected to be at home until nine or ten o'clock in the evening, as the stage did not return until that time; and my maid, who had leave to be absent until sunset, was not in the habit of being very punctual; consequently I was entirely alone, and thus became unwell, retired to my bed, and there a male infant was born. I heard it faintly cry once or twice, and knew nothing more until my maid and two respectable old ladies were by my bedside. The Doctor soon came. They told me my child was dead, and I was silent as the grave. My mother seemed to feel relieved that it was dead, and let fall some expressions to that effect; but for several days nothing more was thought of it.

Just as I had gained strength sufficient to set up a few minutes at a time, my mother told me that she heard Mr. Pigeon had returned from the west, and had preached in the adjoining town to ours the last Sabbath, and that she had written to her lawyer to know what course he would advise; but the very next morning I was apprehended and carried before a magistrate on a charge of having murdered my child! Great God! thought I, is my cup of miseries never to be full! "Take me to thyself, oh! Father of Mercies! Hide me in the grave—bury me in the centre of the earth,"—burst from my lips. The magistrate heard but a single witness,—my maid,—who had of late been quite changed towards me, and often was impudent, although my mother gave her great wages as a sort of reward for her silence. I was fully committed for trial and treated as one condemned already. After a few days incarceration my keeper seemed more kind, and offered me every civility his office would allow. The jailor's daughters informed me of all that was going on in the village to amuse me; and among other things, that a gentleman from ——— had been with their father a few days before. "He was," they said, "a very handsome man;" he conversed with them about me, and told them that kindness to the afflicted was natural to the female heart—that all should be considered innocent until proved guilty—and even the guilty should be treated with justice. They said they had shunned me before this conversation, but now they would come and see me as often as I wished. They described his person and dress, and I was not at a loss to conjecture who the stranger was; but, they added, that their father would not mention his name then. They shew me a book which he gave them, requesting them, at the same time to loan it to me when they had read it, and that they had now brought it up. It was the *Vicar of Wakefield*, which I had frequently read, but such a novel will bear repetition an hundred times. I opened it and found the motto, "*Sperate miseri cavete felices*;" translated "Hope, oh! ye wretched; beware, oh! ye happy"—with three marks under the first part of the sentence. This I thought was meant for me. In looking farther into the book, I saw several pencil marks, and some few notes. One I remember very distinctly; it was written after the closing line of that sweet little song which begins "When lovely woman stoops to folly." The note was very pointed—"To wring her bosom is to die!" "No—it is folly to die, for there are bosoms too callous to be wrung. Live, to bring him to justice—to leave the brand of infamy upon him; not for vengeance alone, but to prevent him from leading others to ruin and disgrace!" This was sufficient for me.

One day the girls,—daughters of the jailor,—came in and said they had discovered the name of the gentleman who had visited the house, for he had employed Mr. Munson, the

lawyer close by, to look up some witnesses for my trial, and had given Mr. Munson a liberal fee. His name, they said, was Meredith—General Meredith,—of the city of —, an eminent advocate. This threw the blood into my face, which even these young girls, ignorant of many of the great principles of human nature, knew enough to learn my deep interest in the name, and that he was a person whose services were of importance to me.

Notwithstanding my kind treatment, the days passed heavily away, and I longed for the day of trial, turn which way it might. There was an indifference about me as to the issue; my spirits were broken—my heart sick—and I wished to hide myself in the grave; but I did not wish to leave the world until I had vindicated my innocence of the alleged murder of my infant. I was free from all this, and all other things that had been brought against me, but the world must be convinced also.

The court met, and by the testimony of my maid and one other person, the Grand Jury found a bill. The judges were the same as on my former trial, although the distance was an hundred miles from the former place. The day was fixed—I was arraigned and pleaded not guilty—and when asked if I was ready for trial, Mr. Munson answered yes. At this moment, Mr. Attorney General said the cause would proceed. The witnesses were called and answered. He went on. The first witness was my maid. She swore, as it was called, very hard against me. I was astonished, with my little knowledge of judicial proceedings, that she was not stopped, for she ran on with a deal of what she had heard about me, but as Meredith and Munson said nothing, I supposed that they were obliged to admit all this. The Rev. George Christopher Sinclair took the stand next. He testified that I said to him, when he had a private interview with me, that I would kill myself or my child, or both. The doctor was next called. He was naturally an honest man, but was prejudiced against me by my enemies. His statements were not much out of the way, but his opinions respecting marks of violence about the infant were not given very decidedly. A young physician was next called, who said that there were no marks of violence about the child; nor could it, in his opinion, have lived an hour with every skill and attention. From every circumstance in the case, and he had examined all of them, there was left no suspicion on his mind of any improper conduct on the part of the mother. The court intimated to my counsel that they need proceed no further; but Meredith replied that if the court had no objection, he should, for the reputation of the prisoner, proceed a little farther in the testimony. Miss Quinn was then called. It startled me to hear her name, and to see her come forward as a witness for me; but I was silent. She went through a long examination. She said that after my confinement a long letter was received from my maid, Moll Thompson, directed to her, stating the circumstances, and requesting me to tell Mr. Pigeon that now was his time to get rid of all his troubles, for the child was murdered. She said she lost no time in sending to Mr. Pigeon, who came on from the upper part of the State of New-York, and, with Sinclair, had a conference at my house, where the plan was laid to convict the prisoner. I have to discharge my conscience, and tell all, for I know that God will never forgive me unless I do. It was Mr. Pigeon who gave me the watch I mentioned on the former trial, for theft; and Moll Thompson agreed to convey it into the prisoner's draw. The plan was, to destroy the testimony of the prisoner in order that she should not have her oath taken when she attempted to swear her child upon Mr. Pigeon. She continued, and said, Moll Thompson told her that she bought a quantity of laudanum at Mr. Pigeon's request, and gave it to the prisoner on the night of the thunder storm! The audience were astounded; the court ordered Moll Thompson in custody, but she was no where to be found. The plot, of which I had been the victim, was now fully developed, and my enemies had fled. All that I had stated had been proved; but what was I, a poor wretch, pitied, but not admitted

again to society. I had braced myself up for this crisis—and had passed it ; now I wished to die. “Oh now let the earth hide me,” was my constant wish, and it often came in words to my lips, and perhaps sometimes escaped them. My counsel made a few observations of a deep and solemn kind,—not asking the jury to acquit me, but on the nature of the conspiracy to destroy me. The court made a few remarks, and complimented my counsel for assisting to bring to light such nefarious transactions. My mother, who had been declining ever since my misfortunes began, was now very feeble, and was advised by her friends to go into the city for medical aid, where she could get the best, and where I could hide my individuality in the multitude.

We went into the city accordingly ; but the death wound had been given to my dear parent, and all could not save her. She lingered a few months, and then sunk into the grave. She never gave me a severe word or look in all my misfortunes. Gentle spirit ! thou enjoyest the happiness of the blessed—thy religion was pure, humble—hoping for thyself without condemning others. Meredith was made trustee for me—and after the funeral of my mother, sent his clergyman to advise me on a course of life, stating, what I might expect quarterly from the proceeds of my mother's estate. I determined not to receive a cent of it for it was all his own for his exertions for me and my mother. I reasoned, but reasoning was all in vain ; and I came to the full determination to leave the country, or that part of it, forever. I left a farewell letter to my friends, in order that they should have no suspicions of an abduction in the case.

I now changed my name to Mrs. ———, the wife of an English officer, and stated that I was travelling on business, as my husband could not leave his regiment ; and this was the first time I had ever deliberately falsified the truth. I reached one of the largest cities in the union, and again changing my name, endeavored to find employment at my trade. This was not difficult, but the wages were small, and I could not dress myself as well as others in the like employment for what I could earn ; at times, too, I saw in the streets of the city, faces that I had known at home, and sometimes I thought they knew me, and therefore concluded to remove still farther off ; but I have since learned that it is quite impossible to escape from my rambling countrymen, who are found in every city and village,—on every mountain and stream,—which the geographer has set down or the traveller ever reached. To dress myself as well as my associates in the shop, I ran in debt to the mistress, who was “no better than she should be ;” for she had urged me to take up articles which were expensive, and soon intimated to me that she wished for payment, and sneeringly said, “one of your appearance should not want for means ; if I had your face and form I would be mistress of my wishes in spite of all that could be said.” I parried this as long as I could, and as well as I could ; but she was too sharp sighted for me to move without her knowledge.

One night I had been at work late on a dress, when a constable came in with a warrant for fifty dollars. I had nearly sufficient to pay him, but he must have all or none. I was preparing to go to prison, when Mr. Godeau, a French gentleman stepped in and inquired what was the difficulty. I told him the whole story, and he offered to become my bail ; but the officer did not know him, and of course would not take him ; and he quieted all by paying the full amount of my debt. This act awakened my gratitude, and as I was so expressing myself to him the next day, he adroitly replied, “there is one way for you to make me your debtor.” “How is that ?” I inquired. “To become my wife,” he replied. This was a different proposal from what I really expected, situated as I was, and I had no certainty that he was a single man ; nor did I wait for that certainty, but consented to become his wife that evening. With him I travelled over most parts of the United States, Canada, and South America. His treatment was always gentlemanly and kind, and this

was the first time since I was fifteen that I was even composed, not to say happy. One incident only during this time disturbed my repose. I understood that Meredith had been so unfortunate as to be under the necessity of fighting a duel, growing out of my affairs.

The facts were these. The Rev. George Christopher Sinclair had a high-spirited son, who was abroad when my trial was had. On his return, it was represented to him that Meredith had disgraced his father, and he at once sent the counsellor a challenge. This was instantly refused by the sound principled gentleman; but young Sinclair not satisfied to be so put off, whispered "coward," as he passed the General entering the court. This was too much—he raised his hand and struck the youth to the ground. The challenge was repeated and Meredith thought himself now bound to give the youth satisfaction for so far forgetting what was due to a gentleman as to strike a blow, except in self-defence. He informed the second of Sinclair that he was willing to apologise for the blow, but nothing else would he suffer to be connected with that subject; that must stand alone, for that was the only offence for which he was amenable. This was not accepted, and he was asked when it would be convenient for him to bring the matter to an issue. He answered four weeks from that day, on the Canada lines; that it was impossible for him to get his extensive business arranged before that time. He was on the spot the day and hour agreed upon; and had suggested to the second of Sinclair that he might choose his weapons, although the right was in the challenged; but he would waive it, and intimated that Sinclair had better practice in the mean time at any weapon he might select, only giving the challenged six days notice. At this time, he received a note from the second, stating that small swords would be the weapon used. He took a pair of small swords in his gig, a pair of pistols of the first workmanship, in case the young gentleman should change his mind, and left home with only his servant on horse-back, as was his usual custom. When he reached Burlington he began to look about him for a second. He expected to find some officer of the army there, but in this he was disappointed, and chance threw him into the company of my husband, who mentioned to me that such a gentleman had arrived, and for what purpose. I had not been at the public table since my arrival. I asked him if he did not intend,—as he could do it without subjecting himself to any inconvenience,—to offer his services to see that the affair was properly adjusted? His French chivalry took fire at the suggestion, and producing his proof as a member of the legion of honor, offered his services. The next morning they passed over to the Canada side—swords were measured, and the contest began. I had prepared myself a male dress in case of emergency when I left home, as an adventurer, which I put on, hired a horse, passed over, and was a witness to the contest. Young Sinclair was impetuous and bold; Meredith stood entirely on his defence; Sinclair was soon disarmed, and as he sprang to catch his weapon, Meredith might have run him through the body, but he suffered him to pick up his sword and come on again. He was soon disarmed a second time, when Meredith put his foot upon the sword of his antagonist, and holding the point of his own at the breast of the disarmed, said, "young man, your life is spared on condition that you promise perfect civility to me and my friends hereafter, and that you will not send another challenge for ten years, until you have more discretion than at present." Sinclair's second instantly advised him to accept these conditions, which he did and walked off the field. General Meredith spoke to Major Kirkwood, the friend of the youth, to detain the hot-headed boy until they could have an interview, which was held before they came over to the American side, in which the liberal soul, Meredith, gave the boy a letter to the War Department, recommending him for a lieutenancy in the army; and I understood that this was shortly obtained. I hastened to the hotel, and was ready to receive my husband on his return. He had no suspicion of my adventure. The next



day my husband invited Meredith to dine with him, and told me of it but a short time before dinner. I was in great distress and made the best excuse I could for not coming to the table. My early and best friend did not discover me.

The happiness I enjoyed,—if such a state could be called, in any way, by that name,—was not of long duration. On our return to the city one evening, while we were setting with a few friends at the supper table, we were thrown into consternation by a loud rap at the door. The servant soon entered, followed by a gentleman and lady. She uttered a scream as she saw Mr. Godeau, calling him husband, and flew into his arms! I saw the whole at a glance—it was the wife he had deserted in France, accompanied by her brother. It was an awkward, disagreeable affair for all of us; but I had my marriage certificate with me, and plucked up courage to inquire why we were so rudely broken in upon? The woman was coarse, stout, and a termagant. She raved at her husband,—as she called him, and I found, to my sorrow, that he was,—and then at me. She was prodigal of the worst of epithets, and would have attempted to assail me if my friends had not interfered and protected me. Mr. Godeau went out with all the gentlemen, and the lady,—as I am constrained to call her,—soon followed, but I had previously fled to my chamber and locked myself in. Mr. Godeau did not return that night, but I saw him early in the morning. He swore he heard that she had died in France, and expressed a wish that it had been true, but unfortunately it was not. He attempted to soothe me by telling me that he would get rid of her as soon as possible, for he never would live with her as a wife again, for she was the most disagreeable of all woman kind. I plainly saw that my connexion with him must end, and I braced myself up to make the best of my situation. He finally made up his mind to go to France with his first wife, and I relinquished all claim to him. This was no sooner agreed upon than carried into effect; and on his departure, he left me all his moveables, with some cash.

I could now have returned to my trade, with ample means to open a shop, but I had not sufficient resolution for the undertaking. My early misfortunes had destroyed my firmness of purpose, and my idle life as a wife,—as I was called, but as a mistress, as I had always felt it,—destroyed all my habits of industry; I could only decorate my person and fly from one pleasure to another to stifle my sense of degradation and misery. A woman once estranged by any cause, from the paths of duty, or thrown out of the pale of society by any accident, in which her reputation is concerned, feels all her virtues set loosely about her; when chastity is gone, veracity soon follows; she depredates where she can, and grows selfish as she finds others false; she is deceitful in herself and is a spy over others; she envies every poor wretch the pittance she may gain, even while she would scorn to take the same herself for the same considerations. Her tears are crocodilian—her caresses deceptive—her vows false as hell—and all about her poisonous as death. I had not yet reached this state of sin, but was rapidly on the road to it. For three months I lived in great splendor, waiting to hear from Godeau. At the expiration of that time a letter came, and contained just what I expected. It was civil, perhaps affectionate; but he was not decided whether he should return or not, and stated that it was impossible for me to come there, as his enraged wife

would certainly do me some personal injury if I were to venture to France. The letter enclosed a small remittance, and I clearly saw that this would be the last that I should ever receive from him.

Mr. Godeau had left a considerable quantity of wines in the house when he went away, and I had never thought of them until now, for I had not the least propensity to intemperance, but when all hope of his return was gone, I steeped my senses in them in order to forget my misery. Sometimes I was so inebriated that my maid had to put me to bed, but she soon swallowed as much as myself, so that we were not unfrequently like the "blind leading the blind;" and often she left the marks of her potent fist upon my face. My property was rapidly wasting by profusion and neglect. My situation soon became known to the gay men of the city, lovers hovered around me, and I soon found myself on the frontiers under the protection of an American officer. I relinquished my habits of drinking, for I could not find any such wine as I had swallowed in such quantities, and I never could bear the sight or smell of ardent spirit. The officer made and gave me a "will and power" in case of accident. I was of great service to him, as my education was greatly superior to his. I studied all the forms of returns and orders, and wrote them so handsomely that I found full employment, which kept my mind comparatively at ease. If I was not treated with as much respect as I could have wished, I was not subjected to neglect or insult. In one of the numerous battles on the frontiers, my friend was wounded and taken prisoner; and as his wounds were very severe, the British commander allowed him to send for his wife. An order was made for me to pass the lines, which I did without consulting any one of my own countrymen.

On reaching the British camp, I was received with the attentions due the wife of a brave officer; and through the surgeon that attended him I was recommended to the courtesies of the officers near us, and who were at all times very civil. I soon found that my husband—as he was now called, and supposed to be,—would never survive his injuries, and he was well aware of it himself. One day, as I was at his bedside, he said to me in a very mournful tone, I must die, and that shortly—I wish to protect you as far as I can after my exit, and for this purpose I have sent for the British chaplain you saw here the other day—he knows all, and will ask no questions. I was astounded, but could not refuse—and we were married. After this he seemed to revive; but the flattering symptoms soon disappeared, and all hopes were at an end—he expired in my arms. I was now really a widow, but our connexion commenced in such a way that I did not feel the sanctity of the "*holy wedlock of Paradise*;" it was a vile connexion after all, nor could a thousand ceremonies make me an honest woman. I lived sometime in Canada, finding it more pleasant among those where I had been known only as wife and widow, than on the American side, where I had been more extensively known. I had sent on my will and power, and obtained all that was due my husband at his death.

On my return to the United States I assumed my maiden name, and as I had not been previously known by this, I escaped such inquiries as would have been

made had they known me for the self same Mrs. Godeau, who once figured in fashionable life.

There is another incident I ought not forget to mention to you. When in Canada, I was one day overtaken by,—or rather met,—a blind man led by a dog, that the man had by a string. Hearing my voice,—for my waiting woman was with me,—the unfortunate creature extended his hand for charity. He had a piteous tale to tell. He said he had been a soldier, and was with Drummond when he made the attack upon Fort Erie, and that his eyes were burnt out in that terrible explosion of a part of the works. I questioned him as to his birth-place and former occupation and standing in life. He was taken by surprise and made very incoherent answers to my questions; he went so far, however, as to acknowledge that he once lived in the United States, came to Canada some years before, and had joined the British army on the breaking out of the war. I knew his voice and person well—it was the remnant—the mutilated relic—of the Rev. Deodat Pigeon! I put a guinea into his hand,—for his appearance was too pitiable for resentment,—told him that he had “been a bad man for fighting against his country, and that he had, no doubt, other sins unrepented of besides treason.” He turned his eyeless face towards me, and seemed surprised at my remark, and more particularly at my voice. I bade him pass on, and he moved slowly away, trusting to a dog for guidance. “And this is he,” thought I, “who boasted once that angels had charge of him, that he should not dash his foot against a stone!—poor weak human nature—poor boast of the final perseverance of saints, by those who are themselves the worst of sinners!” A few days after this, I heard that the miserable blind man was found dead on a pile of dirt in a horse shed, and that his faithful dog still guarded his body. I sent for the animal, and kept him a number of years, until he died of old age. I took an interest in a creature, who was faithful to a wretch that was faithless to every one he knew; faithless to his religion, his country, and his God.

On my return to my native state, I took lodgings with a Mrs. S——. She had a large house out of town, and although I knew she was not a vestal, it was a long time before I detected any improper movements about the house. She was an intelligent woman, and as artful as intelligent. By her I was made acquainted with every *faux faux* in fashionable life. Every character in the gay world was so familiar to me from this woman’s description, that I could have made a Directory of the names and places of abode of every woman of pleasure in the city, and of all their paramours; and I could, also, from her manner, separate those she did know from those she pretended to be familiar with. She was old in the course of vice, yet had so contrived to keep up appearances, that on a time when the character of her house was more than suspected, she contrived to bring some very steady, excellent women in the neighborhood to testify that she was a most exemplary, moral, and religious person. This Massalima had been divorced from her husband when she was the criminal cause of it. She had then a daughter at school, whose chastity she had violated by contract before the girl was conscious of any distinction of sexes; and so artful was she, that she was educating one of her sons as a clergyman, while the other was kept at sea. She would put on her

bonnet and visit a pious sister, ostensibly for friendship, while she was solely intent on seeing who her chamber maid might be. Her dress was that of a Quaker, so modest as to attract attention from its very simplicity. For years she flourished with great sway. Those who knew her well feared to offend her, for she was vindictive as plausible. When her daughter came home, I was struck with her noble appearance. She was rather stately in her manners, finely formed, and well educated. She read Italian and French with great ease and fluency, and knew something of Latin, so much as to be able to read Virgil with a relish. She danced gracefully, played like a lady upon a piano and harp, and, taking every accomplishment into consideration, with her personal beauty, Fanny S—— was the most splendid girl I ever saw. This fiendish mother set her price, but the daughter so awed some of the contractors with the majesty of her demeanor, that they gave up the pursuit. In this brothel, surrounded as she was by those of boasted prowess, with her mother to aid them, she remained unpolluted for two years, and at length was overcome by the vilest arts. But her soul was too high for such degradation. Awaking to a sense of her situation, she indignantly spurned every visitor---spoke daggers to her mother---kept her room---breathed her complaints alone as much as she could---and with the highest delight watched the progress of a consumption which she found had seized her! Day by day she declined, and rejoiced to see how rapidly she went. Those who saw and heard her were awed in her presence---she was preparing for an angel's errand---and she seemed purified by anticipation. She did not upbraid her mother, but implored her, with tears that would have soothed a monster, or converted an atheist, to prepare for eternity. The feelings of the wretch were moved, but she was not in the slightest degree penitent. I was with the girl when she died, and never while on earth, shall I forget the scene! It preached a thousand sermons in a minute. I knelt by the corpse, and took heaven to witness that I would devote the remainder of my days to bringing the wandering back to virtue. The sequel of the fate of this mother should be known. She became lost to all sense and feeling, and finally committed suicide by cutting her throat with a razor. The young and virtuous student, who had not known the reputation of his mother until her death, on being made acquainted with her history at that time, went mad, and dashed his brains out against the bars of a window in the Insane Hospital; the other son was lost in the vortex of intemperance. Such are the fruits of vice---such a hell-born monster is a wicked mother!

I had no sooner made up my mind to the course I intended to pursue than all was brave and joyous about my heart. I had no settled plan, but no crusader was ever more determined to persevere than myself. I went to my native place forthwith, and called on my mistress,---she of whom I learned my trade,---and after hearing a part of my story, she received me very kindly, and told me that Meredith, on the eve of his giving young Sinclair satisfaction, had made over all his trusts to *you*, my dear sir, and that I was well off if not rich. From my kind mistress I went to see Meredith, and he received me with a suppressed warmth of affection, which gratified me most of all, for it was affection, and proved to me, that I was once nearer his heart than I imagined myself to have been. He inquired if I knew any thing of my father's papers respecting his Spanish claims? They had been in my trunk through all my travels, and were precisely the documents required to establish those claims, the recovery of which Meredith now considered certain. In the fulness of my soul, I named to him the whole of my plans; to which he replied, smilingly,

"God bless your undertaking; but act for yourself, without directors or visitors, and let your exertions be constant without display or exaggeration."

I took my money, bought a farm in the neighborhood of a city, and began my operations by planting a large number of Mulberry trees, and prepared to commence a silk establishment. I also procured stuffs for coarse clothes, fine and coarse sheets, and commenced by going among the frail sisterhood and inducing them to come to my asylum on wages. My regulations were strict, but uniform; I gave them work and amusement. The hours of both were regular. A school was opened for them three hours in a day; and on Wednesday a sermon was read, and two every Sunday. I banished all profanity, and light talk or light reading. A few good books were procured, and these were thoroughly read; and in a short time every thing was system and order. The vicious were reclaimed by gentle means, and the few who were incorrigible were dismissed. My habitation is the abode of industry, order and good morals, and many are made hopefully religious. I never asked the unfortunate to qualify themselves for my establishment by previous sins; the inmates are not allowed to speak of their former lives---they commence a new one the moment they enter my institution. Every thing is prosperous about me; no fanatical preacher is allowed to enter my walls, yet hundreds of pious men buy my articles, and give whatever aid I ask. Those who make virtuous mothers and faithful servants leave my roof. Good food---proper clothing---and constant instruction in business and the labors of life, are mingled with moral and religious improvement in my institution. I am happy in what I have done, and in what I am doing. Chaste matrons visit my institution and approve my plans---the blessings of the good are upon us, and the Lord is with us. To your management, care, and honesty, I am indebted for my means of doing good, never forgetting him who has done so much for me, in so high-minded and generous a manner. May prosperity attend you here and happiness hereafter, is the sincere prayer of one who was lost and is found---who was dead and is alive again.

With feelings of the highest respect,  
and gratitude,  
Yours, &c.

EXPERIENCE BORGIA.

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#### TO MRS. EXPERIENCE BORGIA.

MADAM—Sometime has elapsed since you kindly, at my request, sent me a short narrative of the events in your extraordinary life; and since that period, I have heard the favourable opinions of all classes of people upon the plan you are pursuing to do good in bringing back to virtue those who have strayed from the paths of chastity and honour for a precarious support. Your Asylum was the first of the kind ever established in this country, and the only one, I believe, in the world, founded and supported by the single exertions of a lone woman. The good citizens of Philadelphia, who are ever foremost in the duties of charity, have established an asylum for repentant females, who are sick of the walks of infamy and crime; and some of the eastern cities have established domestic Missionaries, who give able and proper reports of their doings. These efforts were connected with places of refuge for repentant Magdalens, as they are called.

In January, 1830, little more than a year ago, a Magdalen Society was founded in the city of New-York. Within a few weeks, the President and Directors of the Institution have made and published a Report, which has excited a great sensation here, and is generally condemned. In the first place, the style is objectionable. Plain facts, fairly stated, should be the ground work of a Report of this kind; but in this, a show of feeling,

and an attempt at pathos, are mingled with what they would have us take for facts.—Some portion of the language is quaint and canting—for instance, in the sixth page:—“It seems that these two young men, brothers after the flesh, as well as in spirit, had their minds impressed that they might glorify God by spending the summer vacation in visiting those parts of our city, where vice and infamy abounded,” &c. Other expressions, which I forbear to quote, are of this canting order, and totally unworthy the pen of gentlemen, or the character of philanthropists. The basis on which they found their reasoning and opinions, is next to ridiculous, viz: the experience of two brothers after the flesh—tyros from a Theological Seminary. Pretty creatures to have a healing influence upon such a vice! If they were as pure and honest as they ought to have been, they could not know any thing of this vice; if they were acquainted with the vice and its haunts, they should have given some evidence of their repentance before they sat out on such a mission. The story is not told in the simple language of truth, such as Howard used when he gave the measure and gauge of misery; but these boys,—*brothers after the flesh*,—must have their deeds at the *Five Points* ushered in with a flourish of trumpets:—

“They were alone,—nay, they were attended by the stranger’s God, and the angel of the Lord encamped about them. Their record was on high, and their reward in Heaven, and although their errand was one in which angels might be honored, yet no herald announced their arrival; but we have reason to believe that very soon “there was joy in Heaven among the angels of God” over more than one of these sinners repenting through their instrumentality.”

They find the number of those who abandon themselves to the vice of prostitution to amount to ten thousand, by the following data: “the opinion of an Alderman.” One single man out of that honorable body is only named to fix the number of harlots in a city! This Alderman was a bold man, and probably founded his opinion without entering into a single calculation. This reminds one of the fellow who swore that he saw ten thousand dead dogs up at the City-Hall one morning, and had the folly to ask his companion, who doubted the number, to go with him and see; when lo! there were nineteen! On their being counted, he was asked, “where are now your ten thousand?”—he, confounded for a moment, said, “Well, did you ever see so many dead dogs together before?” “No,” replied his friend. “Well, then, that was all I meant.”

The Report goes further, and says, “We have the names, street and number of the houses of ill-fame in this city, notoriously inhabited by abandoned women; and also the houses of assignation where daily and nightly the pollution of girls and women of all ages and colors, married and single is habitually committed. Many of these sinks of iniquity are in respectable neighborhoods, disguised under the mask of boarding houses, dress-makers, milliners, stores and shops of various kinds. Some of them are large and elegant houses, provided with costly furniture, and have brass and silver plates on the doors, on which are engraved the real or fictitious names of the occupants.”

There is no disguise about these Directors. They go on to make known the method and means of arriving at this measure of knowledge: “These haunts of iniquity have been discovered partly by the aid of the Police officers, partly by the girls and women who have been rescued from pollution by the Asylum, and partly by the vigilance of persons male and female employed by the Society. By these means we have arrived at very many of the secrets of these nests of abomination, the number of lewd women who reside or resort to each, the arts and intrigues by which the victims of seduction are procured as well as the *names* of scores of the men and boys who are the seducers of the innocent, or the companions of the polluted. Hence our opportunity of judging of the extent of prostitution in the city, is now by no means limited, and we are satisfied we do not exaggerate when we repeat, that there are now *ten thousand* girls and women, in the city of New-York, who live by public and promiscuous prostitution. Besides these we have the clearest evidence that there are hundreds of private harlots and kept misses, many of whom keep up a show of industry as domestics, seamstresses, nurses, &c. in the most respectable families and throng the houses of assignation every night.”

The citizens of New-York are told that all their houses are numbered and marked ; no appearance of "brass or silver plates" can disguise them. And the houses are not only known, but "the names of scores of men and boys" are set down, for the pure purpose of ---what ? of extending the pious slanders of these guardians of the public morals ! And how is *this information* obtained ? "Partly by the girls and women who have been rescued from pollution by the asylum," and partly by the male and female spies employed by the society to watch "the whereabouts" of every citizen ! To encompass their objects, a system of espionage is established, and the credibility of a prostitute made unquestionable for this, by getting within the walls of a Magdalen Asylum !

The number of impures, as stated in the report, is sufficient to strike horror into the minds of every one. It certainly gives up one half of the female population from fourteen to fifty, to perdition. This report, if believed, would have made the fathers and husbands in the city stark mad : and as it is, every one felt a burning on his forehead that so infamous a libel was published. It is not worth while to follow these slanders, to refute them ; the grossness of the lie, in some measure, makes the libel harmless, at least, in the city. But not so abroad.

To support their cause, the directors go to the romance of the brothel ; and *Peggy*, and *Nelly*, and *Wilhelmina Amelia Skeggs*, all give their experience, and state the great amount of sin and the incredible number of sinners ! And these stories, obtained by those who "spoke closely and feelingly to each of the women," are promulgated for the inspection of the chaste matrons of the city of New-York ! This is all the veriest trumpery that ever was published, and the directors ought to be ashamed of it. These girls, finding out the precise taste of those who come to reform them, indulge their own passions for romance, to see how far some of these righteous teachers will swallow their stories ; and when the dupe goes out from their presence, they will compare notes to see who has made up the best romance. There is nothing more common than this hoax, as is well known to all.

In the twenty-third page of the report, there is a fact stated as having been *obtained from the reformed women of the asylum*, which outrages any thing in the annals of fiction. Hercules' exploit with the fifty daughters of a king, which in the heroic ages was considered fabulous, is nothing to the labors of one of these reformed Magdalen's from Saturday night to Monday morning ! On the same page, there is a calculation made of visits, &c., and of the wages of sin, which is an insult to the understandings of men who can put two figures together, expressed in language more bold and gross than can be found in *Patroneus Arbiter*, *Johannes Secundus*, *Cleland*, *Bonnel Thornton*, or *Peter Pindar*. It is impossible for a man, who is not a fanatic or bigot, to look through the whole of the report and arise from it without horror and disgust ; for it has the perfume of the brothel, the cant of a camp meeting, and the nauseous details of a — dance when examined the next morning after a row at the public court room ; and is interspersed with falsehoods that would make *Medez Pinto* blush, and *Munchausen* solicitous of adding them to his volume of travels, if he could forget the foul language in which the details are made.

The evils of this report are too numerous to be mentioned. They cannot now all be seen or felt. It tells Europe, and particularly England, that what they have said of us is true, that "*America is a nation rotten before she is ripe.*" If this report were credited,---but, thank God, it never will be,---New-York would be the

most profligate city since Abdera existed. If this report were credited, a few *brothers after the flesh*---a few reformed harlots---and a few rhapsodical preachers, would be the only instruments to reform the world of these crimes. A thousand years must come and go before this institution, according to their own calculations, can do any thing to make a radical reform. This is not all; if this report gets into the country, it will act as a stimulus to bring the industrious working females into the city, for other purposes than to labor. They will calculate that if so much money can be realized in so short a time, why should they drudge on, scrubbing floors, cleaning parlors, and tending brats?---“Let us visit the metropolis,” will be their language. Poor wretches! you will find yourselves mistaken---the wages of sin is not only death, but “poor as rates.” The deluded ones who are now here, even in their dash and flourish, take turns to go into the street, having but one dress between two or three of them. There is not a twentieth part of these Cyprian statistical calculations they tell you of true. They are all false---and will so prove themselves to you. There is not a branch of industry that is not better fed and clothed than the victims of vice; then why is this misstatement? Is it not that the directors may get money out of the public?

The public are told tales of misery which do not exist, and which never did exist, in manner and form as they are related. They are framed to excite the sympathies of the better part of community, who know nothing of these things, to make them bleed freely, in order that these directors may have the control of the public charities. What examples can they draw from Holy Writ for their purpose? Did Jesus of Nazareth go through Judea promulgating the sins of Mary Magdalen, out of whom he cast seven devils? Does he even allude to her former life to make other converts? Is there any precedent in his history for this display of crime, for the purpose of calling out the benevolent? He attacked the higher classes of sinners, who were hypocrites, who tythed annis, mint and cuming, and neglected the weightier matters of the law. The rich and powerful he calls a generation of vipers, but he does not attack the poor and humble.

All whose names are attached to this report, are not equally responsible for what is found there. Some of the names of these gentlemen are placed there for effect, who, perhaps, never read a word of it. They consented to have their names put to the report, thinking they were in safe hands. Some men are anxious to be distinguished in one way or another, and they sign any thing that will bring them before the public, thinking that they are honored by being placed where great philanthropists also are, unconscious that they were spreading slanders against the city and the nation, and, in fact, against the human race.

Among the leaders of this association, is a fortunate man, but feeble-minded; narrow in his notions, bigoted in his sentiments, and ambitious in his views. He early learned to put thrift and holiness,---as he would call it,---together. He has one degree of credit, perhaps, above other men, and he should be called the founder of a system uniting what he calls charity, with the power of making more money than all his neighbors. In the opinion of many, he is only a cat's-paw for those who are planning great things; but he is a sly one, and has worldly wisdom enough to make dollars where he gives away cents. In his wonderful zeal to do



good, he perhaps forgets that his own traffic is the cause, indirectly, of making more prostitutes, than all the distilleries in the country. The French gewgaws he deals in are the readiest means that can be found to catch the light and vain affections of youthful females. For these things of show the light-minded are ready to do any thing. The bad boys in the retail-stores which deal in his articles are induced to pilfer them when they cannot get money to pay for their libidinous pleasures, and thereby injure those of good honest hearts. Would not a true christian fire his shop and change his business, if he saw that the means of corrupting so many young and ignorant females emanated from himself? An hundred Fanny Wrights could not do so much harm as such a man, even while he thinks he is doing good. She comes out boldly, and her very doings are a corrective of the poison she disseminates, while the exclusive system practised upon by such men as those named, under the specious forms of almost unbounded philanthropy, lead to persecution, to false opinions, to sectarian estimates of character, which, in the end, are always wrong. Fanny Wright *laughs at all laws but those which love has made*, and this love of her own kind; this report unhinges all the estimates of domestic happiness; it informs the reader, if he believes it, in a most solemn manner, that mothers, sisters, wives, and daughters, are false to their sacred duties, and are a base and filthy crew, that is a great proportion of them.

The young man who thought the world tolerably honest, if influenced by this report, will say to himself, "I will form no ties of a domestic nature, for they are more than half false and wretched." "No," says he, "I will never be a dupe; it is better for me to share the amusement as it is going, than to be one of those poor devils, cheated and gulled, as these grave men say so many are." Will not those inclined to vice take advantage of all this, and say, "we are as good as one half of our sex, and that cannot be very bad?" The profane and profligate hold up this report and say to those who were urging their reformation, "why, we are as good as half mankind, and probably better, for we openly avow what they meanly conceal."

It cannot be concealed, that this report develops a part of that system which we have been frequently informed is now, and has for some years been practised upon, by a certain religious sect, for uniting all power, political and ecclesiastical. They brought their whole phalanx to bear upon the Sunday Mail Question, and so sure were they of carrying this project, that on finding they were likely to fail, they forgot themselves and breathed their denunciations deeply and loudly; and threatened members of Congress to their heads, that if they did not come out fully for the passage of the law for preventing the transportation of the mail on Sunday, that they should not be elected into the next Congress! These threats aroused the most stupid to assert their independence. By the over-acting of the agents they lost their cause. Some of the weaker ones came out fully with their views, which put back their claims for sometime, and, it is to be hoped, forever. Their cheating policy of getting subscribers to their petition was so fully exposed in many instances, that they were put down by a bare recital of them. It is high time for every thinking, independent man, to look around and see what his liberties are worth. If he is to be governed and traduced by such men, he will,---if he does not take care of what he is about,---be brought to martyrdom before he thinks of it. If this report brings the judicious to their senses, it will not be without its use; for it required something gross and palpable to stir up the minds of the good natured, easy portion of the community. They have a dose of it in the report, most certainly!

The closing paragraph of this famous report, if it stood alone, would be respectable. It is an appeal to the virtuous women of the land for encouragement and aid in the great cause of reformation ; but connected as it is with all the disgusting details of its preceding pages, it is a vain appeal to their sympathies. They will not join their exertions to those of men so indiscreet,---to use the mildest term that candor could invent,---nor will they, by a look or word, or the contribution of a cent, support a cause got up under such auspices. If good is to be done in the way of bringing from crime and infamy the deluded and betrayed wretches who have "broken Dian's pale," all must be done in secrecy by the wise and benevolent. On the pediment of the asylum, CHARITY should be represented as covering, with her mantle, a returning penitent ; and the image of SILENCE, with her finger on her lips, should point out to every one *that all confessions made within ought not, could not, should not be told*, to man or woman. But if the house of refuge is to be a stage of exhibition, and lewdness and disease are to be brought forward to excite charitable feelings, and the gay and dissipated, like the shades of the departed in Richard's dream, are to walk before the public for the curiosity of the audience, and the sport of the depraved part of it, the attempt at reformation would produce ten thousand more evils than the crime in its present state. Without this report, obscurity would, in a great measure, have surrounded these wretches forever ; and they would have sunk into the grave unknown, and, like the toad-stool upon a dunghill, have perished where they sprung up.

If these guardians of the public weal had not blown the miasma of the moral world through the country, to poison the feebly virtuous, and to taint the minds of those who might have remained in ignorance and innocence, all had been quiet still ; had it not been for these *Cyprian statistics*, that Rochester would have disowned if he had written, and the chaste Charles the Second have suppressed,---fearing they might have corrupted his Portmouths and his Gwinns,---the city would have remained without excitement, and the benevolent would have worked their way silently and quietly, by slow degrees, to the reform of the vile without offence to the virtuous.

Your friend and well wisher,

F. MANDEVILLE.

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TO F. MANDEVILLE, Esq.

DEAR SIR :—I received yours, with the Magdalen Report, in due course of mail. I regret, very much, that such a document should have ever seen the light. It is indiscreet in every point of view ; for it abounds in errors of fact, and errors of reasoning, and shows but little knowledge of human nature, or of the philosophy of correcting follies or crimes. It is a wrong course ever to pursue to make even the vilest appear worse than they are. In almost every breast there is a spark of honor—some light of life—left, that by proper fanning may be kindled up to warm and purify the soul. To pour out too heavy denunciations has often produced despair, rather than hope. Kind treatment succeeds better, I have found, among the worst, than cold, harsh, or violent measures. The obduracy that clings around the depraved heart is easier melted than broken. The fountain of tears is not opened by a blow,—the incrustations must be removed by the falling of the gentlest dews, not by currents of invective. We must not expect to overcome sin by daring onsets. The blessed author of our religion suffered long in the wilderness before he opened his mouth to say "*get thee behind me, Satan.*" Man, proud man, proud even in his virtues, thinks that all evils must yield to his prowess at once ; hence he lavishes more strength than is necessary for the victory, and often loses it for want of prudence.

It was right that these men should be lashed by satire, and led to view their offensive course in its proper light. The discipline will be wholesome: no more such reports will appear. They will send no more shallow-brained agents,—such as went to the Evening Post,—to throw down the gauntlet, and bid defiance to public opinion, by saying the report would be stereotyped, and circulated widely as possible. Pertinacious, feeble, consequential little beings, are the most fretful, positive, and revengeful. This is a law of nature: it is seldom that the powerful mastiff or noble hound runs mad, unless bitten by some mangy, rabid little cur, who is too insignificant to be noticed, until he becomes furious enough to be feared. The busy-bodies in society are,—with an avowed intention to do good,—the greatest pests that can be found. Pimps and spies are full of credulity, for they think the more wonderful their communications the higher value will be set upon their services. Three quarters of all they tell their employers is either sheer falsehood, or the suspicions of their heated imaginations after returning from a survey of the nakedness of the land, with wonderful fictions in their heads.

The public have been so long agitating this subject, that they will soon come to a right understanding upon it; and as an entire remedy can never be expected, the best methods of checking and diminishing this evil in society will be discovered. Educating the poor, and finding employment for them, is the first great step in this science. The Sunday School Institution is an excellent one, if all the good does not flow from it that was expected by those who are in extremes in every thing. The next step is a vigilant public and domestic police. The peace officers should be on the alert; not once in a while to sweep a net and catch hundreds of the foulest of beings; but to see that there is good order and watchfulness every where. Parents, in every walk of life removed from the lower orders,—which must be looked after by the guardians of the public at all times,—should encourage industry within doors; keep their daughters' minds employed; having, also, an eye over their leisure time, and require an account of every moment of it. Preventives are a thousand times better than cures. In the more elevated walks of life, a parental solicitude should be extended to their amusements, to their associates, to the books they read, to the estimates they form of virtue and vice. In fact, parents should make companions of their children, not treat them as playthings when they are small and strangers when they grow up; should teach them the beauties of a pure, elevated, moral, and religious life; should teach them religion without rant or fanaticism,—religion that is a purifier, not a disturber of the mind. A sickly imagination should be strengthened by a course of sound philosophy, and a rigid disposition softened by works of pure sentiment and refined taste. When the imagination is tainted and polluted by bad reading, or bad associates, it is accident alone that keeps a female from crime. After all, the gospel precept must be kept forever in view—“*watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation.*” The world is full of evils, that fall and fasten upon us, and our very natures require that we should keep ourselves armed against them, trusting in heaven for support.

Most respectfully,

Your obliged, &c.

EXPERIENCE BORGIA.









